

Tonya Jackson
New Haven Public School Parent
Testimony for Appropriations Hearing
Thursday February 21, 2013

Hello, my name is Tonya Jackson and I am a proud Achievement First parent. I am here tonight not only to advocate for my daughter Keren, but also on behalf of all of Connecticut's public school families.

My daughter Keren Lewis attends Amistad Middle School. This school TRANSFORMED my daughter. When she first began with Amistad Middle School in the 5th grade she was reading at a 3rd grade level. In the beginning, she was a borderline student, introverted with little confidence and learning disabilities.

Now she is in the 7th grade and is reading well above her grade level. As an honor student she plays instruments and has healthy relationships with her peers and staff. Thanks to Amistad my child is not only a successful student, but she's also a confident, growing young lady. I hope you can support our school so that they can continue to help ALL students succeed.

All parents here tonight hope you can support Achievement First in ensuring that every child who attends a well performing public school is treated fairly under the budget so every kid receives a high quality education. Today, Connecticut has 17 public charter schools that are funded at a rate that is on average 25 percent lower than traditional public schools. I am here today to ask you to fund our schools at \$10,500, the number we were promised so that my child's school and others like it can prosper and grow.